REMARKS

The present Preliminary Amendment is being submitted prior to the issuance of a first Office Action and simultaneously with the filing of the present RCE.

At the outset applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the time taken to meet with applicant's representative and for the constructive comments made during the interview.

With this amendment applicant has amended the claims to clearly recite that the insert has a length which projects from the plastic material. As was discussed at the interview, the cited references do not teach a plastic structural element having such a feature. Thus it is respectfully submitted that the rejections of the claims over the prior art are overcome and should be withdrawn.

Furthermore, applicant has amended the end of claim 20 in an effort to remove the functional language. With these changes it is respectfully submitted that the claims now on file particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Therefore, it is submitted that the rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, is overcome and should be withdrawn.
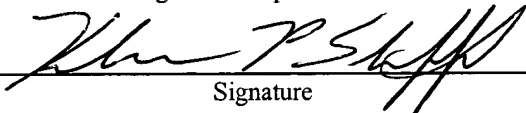
Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

In the event the actual fee is greater than the payment submitted or is inadvertently not enclosed or if any additional fee during the prosecution of this application is not paid, the Patent Office is authorized to charge the underpayment to Deposit Account No. 15-0700.

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231, on April 7, 2003:

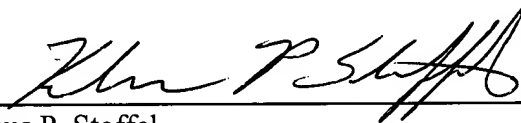| Klaus P. Stoffel |
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| Name of applicant, assignee or Registered Representative |

(signature)
Signature

April 7, 2003
Date of Signature

KPS/cc

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Respectfully submitted,

(signature)

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